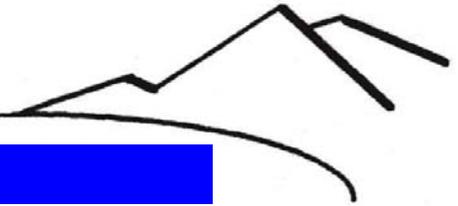


SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS TRAILS COUNCIL



FALL 2007

This Newsletter is Dedicated to the Memory of Bob Boone

How do we measure life? By good friends, by peer acknowledgement, by pride of craftsmanship and skill, by holding to the basic values of honesty, generosity, reliability, integrity, humor and love of family & friends. To these ends, Bob lived a very good life.

After proudly serving in World War II, and remaining a staunch patriot for the rest of his life, Bob made his living as a carpenter. However, he lived his life as a cowboy. He believed in the nobility of work and that "a day of work is a day well spent." He was heart and soul a cowboy; and he embraced the whole tradition of the West from vaqueros to modern ranching and cattle drives. He enjoyed everything western — clothes, books, magazines, poetry, music, museums, and rodeos; and he rode horses for most of his life.

Bob was an outdoorsman who relished all that nature offered — hiking, fishing, camping, and horseback riding. He regularly worked on trails so that others could also enjoy going places that he liked. Exploring wild lands nourished his soul, and he spent a lot of time in the Sierra with family and friends. Bob's legacy will endure as we convey his values to those who follow us along life's trails.

This Navajo Proverb best describes Bob Boone.

I have been to the end of the earth.

I have been to the end of the waters.

I have been to the end of the sky.

I have been to the end of the mountains.

I have found none that are not my friends.

Donations to Bob's Memory

The family of Bob Boone requests that donations in his memory be made to the Trails Council. The funds will be used for trail work projects, an activity that Bob loved to participate in for many years until his illness. The Trails Council is honored to be the recipient of donations in Bob's memory and is most appreciative of the family's generosity.

Please make checks payable to SMMTC and note "Bob Boone Fund" on the check.



PRESIDENT'S VISION

I know that the world is a better place as a result of the work of the Trails Council. The workers, the trails and the public all benefit from our efforts. By maintaining trails, we have combined knowledge with the energy of volunteerism to ensure that the land is cared for and saved. We are making sure that trails will live forever. "The greatest use of a life is to spend it for something that will outlast it," as said by William James. Many of you have spent a good portion of your lives fixing trails so they will outlast you. Your determination, skill, reliability, and passion are appreciated.

Trail workers bring us inspiration — moving rocks, trimming branches, re-routing eroded and steep areas, supporting water banks, killing poison oak, sawing overhanging limbs, opening up vistas and generally enhancing recreation. They help the people who usually take trails for granted, to connect and bond to the land through the enjoyment of the trail experience. As you continue to physically work to improve the endless trails in our mountains that need attention, please remember how much your work is valued. In addition, those who contribute financially are strong supporters of trails by helping us buy tools and materials. Together, everyone does his part to see that trails are safe and enjoyable so that a quality experience is had by all.

Thank you.

Updated Trailhead Map in Preparation

The Trails Council and National Park Service are preparing an updated map showing the location of trailheads in the Santa Monica Mountains. Most trailhead descriptions will include help on finding the trailhead and what amenities are available such as parking and restrooms. The map will be presented on the SMMNRA website at www.nps.gov/samo by the end of 2007.



New Trail Signs Installed in Point Mugu State Park

Seventy-three new trail signs were installed throughout Point Mugu State Park in an effort running from January through June 2007 and coordinated by Trails Council member Jerry Mitcham.

Approximately two years ago, the Trails Superintendent for the Angles District of State Parks, designed and ordered a complete set of new trail signs for Point Mugu. When the new signs were delivered, the local park district was short of funds to install the signs so the Trails Council volunteered to install the signs.

The new signs replace many missing or damaged signs and provide additional signage for trail identification and information. The project replaced all existing signs and added many additional signs throughout the park. Trails Council volunteers worked closely with State Parks personnel to determine requirements for posts, installation tools, hardware, placement, etc.

The Trails Council's installation plan relied on the labor of local volunteers. Some signs were installed as a part of regular SMMTC trail maintenance projects while others were installed by special sign projects. The largest contribution of volunteer hours was by two Eagle Scout candidates, installing signs for their respective eagle projects. Jason Templer of Troop 730 in Newbury Park and James Costello of Troop 765 in Thousand Oaks installed a combined total of fifty-two signs, approximately two thirds of the total project.

Planning for the project began in January and the last signs were installed in late June. In addition to volunteer hours, Trails Council and the Eagle Scout candidates provided financial support to purchase sign posts and other installation hardware.



King Gillette Ranch is Now Parkland

Soka University abandoned their lease-back of the campus property in late June 2007, approximately six months early, allowing park agencies to occupy the 588-acre site and buildings which were purchased in April 2005. Guided hikes were quickly initiated by Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority. Visitors may also hike independently from 8:00 am to sunset. The entrance is at 26800 West Mulholland Highway, Calabasas. Parking is \$5 per day. Dogs are not permitted.

Interim planning for King Gillette Ranch is well

Exploring Santa Cruz Island

The SMMTC has been doing trail maintenance for several years on Santa Cruz Island, a part of the Channel Islands National Park. The 62,000-acre island about 20 miles off the coast has been populated for centuries. Chumash Indians were there for 9000 years; Spanish inhabited it the last 150 years with Justinian Caire developing an agricultural community in the early 1880s that produced "wine, wool, tallow, meat & olives." Ten smaller ranches supported crops of wheat, corn, potatoes, beans, barley, onions and alfalfa hay. At one time there were 50,000 sheep, hundreds of horses and cattle, 150 acres of vineyards, olive orchards, eucalyptus groves, extensive gardens, and all manner of farm and ranch equipment. Caire's descendents, the Gherini family, ranched until 1997, when NPS acquired the island.

In June, several TC members and guests took the one-hour Island Packers' boat to the island, considerably faster than the traditional Chumash canoe, the Tomol. Some explored the trails and some relaxed at Scorpion Beach. The weather was perfect and the boat trip was especially enjoyable with porpoises alongside. Trails Council plans to repeat the excursion next year. In April, anyone interested is encouraged to watch the TC website, www.smmtc.org, or call 818-222-4531 for a fun and informative day.



underway including selection of which buildings will be used as the joint headquarters for the National Park Service and California State Parks. Toward the end of 2008, the former Wisdom Hall and two smaller buildings will become offices for the two agencies. The interim visitor center will be in the old Wisdom Hall chapel, replacing the Thousand Oaks visitor center. In about five years, a new visitor center will be constructed in rehabilitated stables as part of the Centennial Challenge project (see article on page 3).

Information on the park planning process is posted on a website operated by MRCA: <http://smmc.ca.gov/KGRP/index.html>. The public may sign up on the website for updates and is invited to participate in determining the park's long term future.

Although the buildings are closed, the grounds at the site are open to the public from 8:00 am to sunset daily. Visitors are asked to check in at the gate.



Over 20 Trail Miles Improved by SMMTC Volunteers

Since 1 February 2007, Trails Council has provided 2,374 hours of volunteer service to the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, Channel Islands National Park, and Conejo Open Space Conservation Agency, grooming over 20 trail miles.

Most trails are safe and serviceable for all users although much improvement is still possible. Because the low rainfall this past year reduced trail erosion and growth of vegetation, Trails Council has been able accomplish some deferred maintenance which had accumulated over the years. Ongoing projects worth mentioning are:

Old Boney Trail (westernmost 1.5 miles), Point Mugu State Park: Three years ago the State Park was actually considering closing this trail due to its badly deteriorated condition. SMMTC held several maintenance projects, filling ruts, some two to three feet deep, and installing improved drainage. The trail is now serviceable and in greatly improved condition.

Chamberlain Trail, Point Mugu State Park: This is one of the most beautiful trails in the Santa Monica Mountains, partly because of its remoteness. The strenuous, nearly four-mile, hike from the nearest trailhead to middle sections of the trail subtracts from the amount of useful work that can be accomplished. However, with several long work days, all but about two hundred feet have been cleared. It is expected to be complete this fall.

Nicholas Flat Trail(s), Leo Carrillo State Park: This trail system had been badly neglected for the last few years and was in very poor condition. Undertaking this as a Wednesday project last fall, a small but dedicated group of volunteers has greatly improved the trail system.

The top five volunteers during the 2007 trail maintenance season are:

Jerry Mitchan 201.5 hours
Burt Elliott 153
Virginia Grue 118
Norm Simmonds 118
Sharon Simmonds 113

In recent years SMMTC has been increasing the number of volunteer hours and expects this trend to continue. As a result, the outlook is for even more improvement in Santa Monica Mountains trails.



Pepperdine Volunteers Help Restore Trails

Trails Council teamed with students on September 8, 2007, for Pepperdine University's annual service day known as "Step Forward Day." Trails Council's six crew leaders, 41 student volunteers and others joined forces to restore approximately a quarter mile of trail in three hours

While the event accomplished meaningful trail maintenance, it was also an excellent opportunity for the students to experience "giving back" through individual volunteerism.



Partnership Proposals Include New Visitor Center at King Gillette Ranch

SMMNRA may benefit from six proposals for Centennial Challenge funding in fiscal year 2008. These projects are among 201 proposals which were announced on August 23 in Yosemite National Park by U.S. Secretary of the Interior Dirk Kempthorne and Park Service Director Mary Bomar, as the first phase of the park service's Centennial Challenge. For SMMNRA, the public-private partnerships will raise money for recreational experience, education and stewardship.

Details of the six SMMNRA projects are presented in the Trails Council website, www.smmtc.org.



Trail Inventory Maps Available

The SMMNRA Interagency Trail Management Plan (TMP) is currently on hold, but trail inventory maps published by NPS in PDF format may be viewed at www.nps.gov/samo/trails/roster.htm.



ANNUAL MEETING

The Trails Council Annual Meeting will be held on
October 25, 2007

at the home of Ruth and Grant Gerson, providing an opportunity to meet people who share an interest in trails. Members and trail enthusiasts are invited to bring their spouse and friends.

The social hour will begin at 6 p.m., followed by dinner at 7 and meeting at 7:45.

Please RSVP by Monday, 22 October, to facilitate meal planning. Call Ruth at 818-991-1236 and leave your name, telephone number and how many are in your group. The Gerson's home, Wolf Creek Ranch, is at 3450 Cornell Road, Agoura.

24-Hour Species Inventory Scheduled

National Geographic Society in cooperation with SMMNRA park agencies will conduct BioBlitz, an intensive 24-hour census from noon 30 May to noon 31 May 2008 of all living creatures, plant and animal, in the Santa Monica Mountains. This is the second of ten such events to be conducted, one per year, by NGS. Headquarters for the Santa Monica Mountains BioBlitz will be Paramount Ranch. The first BioBlitz took place in 2007 at Rock Creek Park in Washington, DC.



ParkLink Shuttle Up For Review

ParkLink shuttles, initiated in late 2005, will be reviewed for effectiveness to determine in what form they should be scheduled for the new season, beginning in February 2008. The park agencies, national, state and MRCA, will meet in October 2007 to consider their operating experience during the last two years.

The shuttles will not operate in December 2007 or January 2008 because of low ridership.

Detailed schedules and additional information on ParkLINK may be found by calling 888-734-2323 and at www.ParkLinkShuttle.com.



Number to Call for Wildlife Emergencies

A toll-free wildlife hotline — 866-WILD-911 (866-9453-911) — may be called when there is an injured wild animal or bird, either in park interiors or at the beach.

Project Director Rebecca Dmytryk said, "It's like a 911 for wildlife emergencies." For further information on Wild Rescue, call their business line, 818-222-WILD (818-222-9453) or click on wildrescue.org.



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PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP FOR 2008

Dues are on a calendar year basis. Payments in October and later are credited to the following year. Please make your check payable to SMMTC and mail it to P.O. Box 345, Agoura Hills, CA 91376. *Thank you for your continued support.*

Name: _____

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Check to have newsletter sent by e-mail

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

Individual Memberships

Annual Membership — \$35

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* Life membership may be paid in three annual payments of \$150, \$100 and \$100
SMMTC is a tax exempt, non-profit organization under IRS code 501 (c) (3)

Trails Council on the Web

This paper won't self-update, but our website will. Please check

www.smmtc.org

for the latest news and information on the Santa Monica Mountains Trails Council.

CONTACTS

Santa Monica Mountains Trails Council

Mail: P.O. Box 345

Agoura Hills, CA 91376

Phone: 818-222-4531

E-mail: mail@smmtc.org

Internet: www.smmtc.org

Ruth Gerson, President

ruthgerson@aol.com — 818-991-1236

Ed Stauss, Newsletter Editor

ed@stauss.org — 818-883-7843

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